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Ninth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 22 of its resolution 1289 (2000) of 7 February 2000, the Security Council requested me to report on a regular basis on security conditions on the ground in Sierra Leone, so that troop levels and the tasks to be performed by the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) could be kept under review. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and covers developments in Sierra Leone and the subregion since my eighth report on UNAMSIL, issued on 15 December 2000 (S/2000/1199).

2. In paragraph 4 of its resolution 1334 (2000) of 22 December 2000, the Security Council commended my efforts to seek further firm commitments of troops for UNAMSIL and urged all States in a position to do so to consider contributing peacekeeping forces to the Mission. In that resolution the Security Council also expressed its intention, following consultations with troop-contributing countries, to respond promptly to any additional specific recommendations on the force strength and tasks of UNAMSIL. This report, therefore, also describes the Mission's revised concept of operations, its deployment plans for the near future and the progress made in seeking commitments from States to make military personnel and equipment available for UNAMSIL.

II. Political developments

Implementation of the Abuja Agreement

3. During the reporting period, UNAMSIL continued its contacts with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Government to follow-up on the implementation of the Abuja Agreement of 10 November 2000 (see S/2000/1091). Since my last report, the Force Commander, Lieutenant General Daniel Opande, has held several meetings with the RUF interim leader, Issa Sesay, in Makeni and maintained regular radio and telephone contact with his headquarters. My Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, had discussions with the RUF leader by telephone and also maintained indirect contacts with him. Low-level contacts continued between UNAMSIL patrols and RUF ground commanders.

4. In all these contacts, UNAMSIL continued to remind RUF of its obligations under the Abuja Agreement and discussed predominantly military issues with the rebel group. In particular, UNAMSIL pressed RUF to return the weapons seized from some UNAMSIL contingents in May 2000, to reopen the long-closed roads and to facilitate free movement of people and goods in RUF-held areas. UNAMSIL also urged RUF to disengage from the conflict at Sierra Leone's border with Guinea, to embark upon the disarmament and demobilization of its fighters, and to accept the deployment of Government officials.

5. Those contacts have yielded some important results. RUF has reopened several important roads, including the Makeni-Kabala, Kambia-Mange-Port Loko, Bumbuna-Magburaka, and Kenema-Daru roads. UNAMSIL has also been able to carry out routine patrols, as well as periodic robust long-range patrols, along some of the reopened routes. RUF also agreed to open roads which were deliberately damaged by them during the events of May 2000, and they are cooperating in arrangements to repair some of those roads. The RUF leadership has invited UNAMSIL to deploy peacekeepers and observers in Kambia, Lunsar

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and Makeni. In the course of their meetings, UNAMSIL and RUF have set up several contact groups whose primary purpose is to enhance the flow of information, facilitate the movement of UNAMSIL and follow up on all aspects of the implementation of the Abuja Agreement. A core contact group started its meetings in January and regional contact groups have become operational at Daru, Kenema, Mange and Mile 91.

6. So far, RUF have returned to UNAMSIL 56 personal weapons, 10 vehicles, and 20 armoured personnel carriers, which were part of the weapons and equipment seized by RUF from UNAMSIL contingents last year. However, those vehicles and armoured personnel carriers had been completely stripped of weapons and equipment and were not in a usable condition. Mr. Sesay has indicated that the remaining six UNAMSIL armoured personnel carriers have been assembled at Lunsar and Kailahun for collection by UNAMSIL, and that efforts would continue to be made to collect the remaining weapons. RUF has also pledged to assist in locating and exhuming the remains of UNAMSIL personnel killed during the events of May 2000. In this regard, UNAMSIL is making arrangements for the early exhumation and repatriation of the remains, which are believed to be located near Makeni.

Prospects for political dialogue

7. The Government of Sierra Leone has established its own indirect contacts with RUF, primarily through traditional leaders and relatives. However, the slow pace at which RUF is implementing aspects of the Abuja Agreement, which were intended to build confidence and pave the way for a political dialogue, has not helped to remove the deep apprehension about the rebels' intentions.

8. In its contacts with UNAMSIL and through public statements, the RUF leadership has continued to indicate that the rebel movement will not disarm unless the present Government is replaced by an inclusive interim government when its term of office expires on 28 March. They have also demanded that both the Sierra Leone Army and the Civil Defence Force be disarmed and that imprisoned RUF leaders be released. Senior members of RUF also appear to have concerns about their personal futures, in particular with regard to the possibility of their prosecution by the Government.

9. On the other hand, some regional government officials took steps to restrict movement on the roads that RUF had agreed to open for free movement of persons and goods. In response, RUF threatened to close the recently reopened roads. The Government of Sierra Leone indicated to my Special Representative that these restrictions were aimed at minimizing the flow of supplies to RUF. However, following discussions with UNAMSIL, the Government undertook to lift the restrictions so as to ensure that the population in RUF-controlled areas would not continue to suffer. RUF has also complained that Government forces are deploying too close to its lines of control.

10. Against a background of general frustration with the delays in the implementation of the Abuja Agreement, there have been periodic calls by some senior Government officials, parliamentarians, and sections of Sierra Leonean civil society for UNAMSIL, some elements of the Sierra Leone Army and the Civil Defence Force to launch offensive operations. In this regard, UNAMSIL was obliged to call for restraint in order to build confidence and to allow a political dialogue to start.

11. Recently, the RUF leadership appeared to have begun setting up its political wing. They have invited a RUF legal adviser and spokesman, Omrie Golley, to lead a Political and Peace Council, which would be established in Freetown. Mr. Golley, who is expected in Freetown, has said the Council will initiate discussions with the Government aimed at resuming the peace process based on the Lomé Agreement.

12. On 3 March, President Kabbah announced a number of changes in his cabinet, which were mainly designed to fill the post of the departing Minister of Finance, as well as to fill the vacant posts which had previously been occupied by members of RUF prior to their arrest after the crisis of May 2000. As a result, three senior cabinet positions have now been accorded to members of the opposition in Parliament. RUF, which remains excluded from government, has criticized these appointments and reaffirmed that RUF will not disarm unless a government of national unity is formed.

Electoral issues

13. According to the Constitution of Sierra Leone, the five-year term of office of the President will expire on 28 March 2001. Similarly, the term of the

Parliament will expire on 1 April 2001. Consequently, presidential elections were due in February 2001 and parliamentary elections in May 2001. On 26 January, the President submitted two proposals to Parliament in which he recommended, in accordance with the Constitution, that his term of office and the term of Parliament be extended by six months, citing the current state of emergency and the prevailing security situation. On 13 February, a special sitting of Parliament unanimously extended the term of office of both the executive and the legislative branches of Government. On 8 March, the Parliament also extended the state of emergency in the country.

14. Parliament agreed to the extension of the Government's term with the proviso that the Government should work, during the six-month period, towards accelerating the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme for all combatants, with the exception of the Sierra Leone Army; repatriating and resettling refugees and internally displaced persons; extending Government authority to all RUF-held areas; and preparing for the holding of free, fair and transparent elections. Parliamentarians stressed that, should RUF refuse to relinquish control of the areas they currently hold, the Government should issue an ultimatum and take action to engage the rebel movement. Meanwhile, the Sierra Leone Electoral Commission has initiated planning in close collaboration with the Commonwealth constitutional experts and an electoral expert from Ghana.

15. The Electoral Commission has completed its strategic plan and timetable for the parliamentary and presidential elections. The plan envisages the holding of both elections by 31 December 2001. However, there appears to be consensus both among Sierra Leoneans and in the international community that free and fair elections will not be possible until the necessary security conditions are in place and the Government has fully extended its authority throughout the country. One of several crucial conditions in this regard is that both RUF and the Civil Defence Force disarm and demobilize in a credible manner. In addition, there would be a need for the support of all major actors and for an intensive public information campaign.

16. The Electoral Commission will also need to address several crucial issues, including the choice of an electoral system; a review of the electoral law; restructuring of constituency boundaries and polling stations; registration of voters and printing of the electoral roll; and mobilization of logistical and financial support. UNAMSIL has maintained regular contacts with the Electoral Commission and is carrying out contingency planning for an expanded role in supporting the preparations and conduct of the elections in due course. Pending the outcome of an electoral assessment mission, which I intend to send to Sierra Leone shortly, I believe that such an expanded role for UNAMSIL may require the establishment of a special electoral component in UNAMSIL. Such a component would, among other things, provide assistance to the Electoral Commission through technical advice, mobilization of logistical and financial support and civic education. At present, one electoral officer is assigned to the Civil Affairs Section of UNAMSIL.

III. Military and security situation

17. During the reporting period, the ceasefire continued to hold in the country and the military and security situation remained relatively calm. However, UNAMSIL continued to receive reports of fighting at the border areas with Guinea, and of the Guinean military operations against RUF positions in the Kambia district in response to rebel attacks across the border. Attempts by the Sierra Leone Army to move towards RUF positions in the area of Mange Bridge also created some tensions locally.

18. In the meantime, the Sierra Leone Army continues its training and restructuring programme. The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has indicated that it will extend its short-term training assistance scheme to September 2001. Following their initial training, Sierra Leone Army troops have also begun to deploy to the countryside. The Sierra Leone Army brigade that was deployed in the Lungi area has been reassigned to the Masiaka area. Lungi was then garrisoned with a smaller force.

19. It is important to continue to enhance coordination between UNAMSIL and the Sierra Leone Army. UNAMSIL maintains liaison with the Sierra Leone Army and the United Kingdom Task Force through daily briefings and a fortnightly meeting of the Sierra Leone Army Chief of Defence Staff, the Deputy Defence Minister and Civil Defence Force coordinator, the UNAMSIL Force Commander and Deputy Force

Commander, and the United Kingdom Task Force Commander. As a result of these contacts, it is expected that the Sierra Leone Army will gradually take over security responsibilities from UNAMSIL in areas under Government control. UNAMSIL has also set up a liaison mechanism to avoid any security risks to UNAMSIL as a result of Guinean army activities, especially in the Kambia and Kailahun districts.

20. As a result of the gradual improvement in the security situation throughout the country, the Government has further reduced the curfew hours by one hour. UNAMSIL has also considerably reduced the number of its checkpoints in Freetown and has increased the frequency of night patrols along key streets. While the rebel threat to Freetown is now remote, the rising crime rate, in particular armed robberies, is becoming a serious source of insecurity.

21. At the same time, some incidents of extortion at Civil Defence Force checkpoints continued to be reported. A serious incident occurred at Moyamba Junction when Civil Defence Force combatants forcibly seized from troops of the Guinean contingent a box of ammunition that had been previously confiscated during a search on a civilian vehicle. During the incident, Civil Defence Force elements threatened to use their weapons against the peacekeepers. It should be noted that the Civil Defence Force is currently being reorganized, and the restructuring exercise may have resulted in internal divisions, which could create further difficulties.

IV. Regional aspects

22. During the reporting period, fighting in the areas along Sierra Leone's border with Guinea escalated, in particular in January 2001. In response to cross-border attacks, Guinean forces intensified shelling and launched helicopter gunship attacks on suspected RUF positions deep inside Sierra Leone in the Kambia and Rokupr areas, causing civilian casualties and significant flows of internally displaced persons. UNAMSIL received reports of recruitment, for fighting in Guinea, by RUF in the Koinadugu area. RUF was also reported to mobilize troops and vehicles on the main routes into Guinea east of Kabala and in the Koindu area. There have also been reports of incursions by armed elements into Liberia. The Government of Liberia is accusing Guinea of providing support to these armed elements.

23. The Government of Sierra Leone has expressed concern about the loss of lives and property of the civilian population as a result of this military activity. A joint Guinea-Sierra Leone military body has, therefore, been set up to ensure that Guinean forces avoid causing civilian casualties during their military operations against RUF positions. I welcome this initiative and urge that all involved exercise restraint in order to avoid any suffering on the part of the civilian population.

24. In an effort to arrest further escalation of the conflict at Guinea's borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia, I instructed my Special Representative to meet with the leaders of Guinea and Liberia, and with the Chairman of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to convey the concern of the Security Council at the widening crisis. Consequently, Mr. Adeniji met with the President of Guinea, Lansana Conteh, on 13 December 2000, and urged him to use the opportunity of the twenty-fourth summit meeting of ECOWAS on 15 and 16 December 2000 in Bamako to pursue a dialogue with the President of Liberia, Charles Taylor. President Conteh, however, did not attend the summit meeting. On 15 December, my Special Representative met with President Taylor and urged him to take urgent steps to end the escalating conflict. He also called upon the President of Liberia to cooperate with ECOWAS in finding a solution. On 4 January, my Special Representative met with the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Oumar Alpha Konare of Mali, who informed him that Presidents Conteh and Taylor had accepted the idea of a mini-summit to address the conflict at the border, and that Guinean authorities had expressed their readiness to allow the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to relocate refugees trapped in transit camps inside Guinea before their repatriation. Unfortunately, the mini-summit has not been held and relations between Guinea and Liberia continue to be difficult.

25. On 16 December 2000, ECOWAS decided to deploy an interposition force of 1,796 troops along the Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia borders. The proposed mandate of the force would include monitoring the border areas; neutralizing irregular armed groups; facilitating the movement of persons, goods and services; ensuring the security of refugees and displaced persons; and creating a conducive environment for humanitarian assistance. The

envisaged force will obviously require substantial and sustained support by the international community. The United Nations Secretariat will continue to provide technical expertise in the planning of the ECOWAS force, if requested.

26. ECOWAS is currently discussing status-of-forces agreements with both Guinea and Liberia. While Liberia has indicated that it will accept the deployment of the interposition force on its territory, Guinea previously stated that it would not be ready to accept the deployment of the force unless the Security Council imposed sanctions on Liberia. In any event, it will be necessary to develop viable and comprehensive options to deal with the serious security issues in the subregion.

27. Under increasing pressure from the international community, the Government of Liberia on 12 January publicly renounced its support for RUF and called on RUF to lay down its arms. In what it called a policy of "disengagement", the Government of Liberia also announced the expulsion from Liberia of former RUF field commander Sam Bockarie, and all persons associated with RUF. Shortly after that, the Government of Sierra Leone sent a letter to President Taylor requesting the extradition of Bockarie. However, on 7 February, Liberia claimed that Bockarie had left Liberia and that the RUF liaison office in Monrovia had been formally closed. Bockarie's present whereabouts are unknown.

28. The Security Council, through its resolution 1343 (2001) of 7 March, has outlined the specific steps that the Government of Liberia must take with a view to ending its support for RUF and other armed rebel groups in the region. These steps, if taken in good faith, could lead to further progress in the peace process in Sierra Leone. In response to the Security Council's decision, the Government of Liberia announced on 7 March that it had revoked the registration of all aircraft under the Liberian flag, dismissed its director of civil aviation, and ordered the Liberian Central Bank to withhold diamond export permits for 120 days, to allow the Liberian authorities to put in place a certificate of origin scheme.

29. The intensified fighting at the borders of Guinea has further heightened international concern about the fate of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in these areas. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, visited the subregion from 11 to 19 February, to discuss arrangements for access to the affected refugees, and the creation of conditions for their repatriation. I have forwarded to the Security Council the High Commissioner's findings and recommendations, which he also discussed at the Security Council's meeting of 8 March. At present, the priorities of UNHCR are to seek access to refugees and to relocate them to areas of relative safety within Guinea, while at the same time seeking the necessary commitments from the Governments involved, as well as RUF, to allow a safe return of refugees to Sierra Leone in due course. UNHCR has also re-emphasized that any repatriation movement has to be based, first and foremost, on the informed choice and free will of the refugees themselves.

30. Following several meetings with UNHCR, the Secretariat and UNAMSIL are carefully considering the various options for the return of refugees from Guinea to Sierra Leone, including the possibility of a repatriation by road from Guinea through the Kambia district. UNHCR plans to count those refugees who might express a wish to avail themselves of this option as soon as conditions allow. However, a large-scale return, which could place an additional strain on Sierra Leone's infrastructure, is not likely to occur in the immediate future. For the time being, UNAMSIL would continue to deploy in accordance with its concept of operations, which should result in larger areas inside Sierra Leone becoming accessible for a return of refugees and internally displaced persons. The present concept of operations also envisages, subject to the availability of troops, a deployment to key border areas which could facilitate the return of refugees.

Coordination with ECOWAS and other key players

31. According to the Abuja Agreement, the Government of Sierra Leone, RUF, ECOWAS and the United Nations were expected to conduct a review meeting 30 days after the entry into force of the Agreement. In this regard, my Special Representative advised the Ministerial Meeting of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council held at Bamako on 14 December, that, before a review could take place, more time was needed to allow UNAMSIL to test the commitment of RUF to fulfilling its obligations under the Ceasefire Agreement. The Ministers took note of the advice and stressed the need for UNAMSIL to deploy throughout the country in order to facilitate

effective implementation of the Abuja Agreement. The Ministers' decision was endorsed by the ECOWAS heads of State during their summit meeting at Bamako on 15 and 16 December.

32. My Special Representative has maintained regular contacts with the leadership and members of ECOWAS. ECOWAS has also appointed Colonel Mohamane Toure of Mali as its Special Representative for Sierra Leone, which would further enhance its cooperation with the United Nations. It is hoped that Colonel Toure will soon establish his office in Freetown.

33. As the Security Council may be aware, I have sent an inter-agency mission to West Africa, from 8 to 26 March, whose primary objective is to take stock of the priority needs and challenges in West Africa and make recommendations on a coordinated United Nations response to the multifaceted problems confronting the region, taking into account initiatives already under way or being proposed by the various actors. The inter-agency mission will include various United Nations departments, agencies and programmes. A representative of ECOWAS will also participate in the mission.

V. Activities and status of the Mission

Military deployment

34. The military strength of UNAMSIL as at 14 March stood at 10,356 personnel (see annex). The relief of the Indian and Jordanian contingents was completed on 14 February 2001. The advance party of a third battalion from Bangladesh arrived in the mission area in mid-February and the main body and support units began to arrive on 9 March. The expected arrival of a Ukrainian Aviation Unit will also add military capability to the force. The Ukrainian Maintenance and Training Battalion is already in Sierra Leone and has begun training various contingents on the operation of armoured personnel carriers and other vehicles. After the arrival of these reinforcements, it is expected that the Mission's strength will reach about 12,700 military personnel by the end of March.

35. UNAMSIL and the Secretariat in New York have renewed their effort to ensure the required logistical support through the means at the disposal of the troop-contributing countries, contractual arrangements and United Nations-owned resources. Special attention is being paid to the effectiveness of the resources provided to the system of contingent-owned equipment, self-sustainment and contractual support. The Secretariat is discussing these issues both with UNAMSIL and in New York, and is also studying ways and means to ensure transfer to, and use of, support capability belonging to third countries by some of the current troop contributors.

36. With the recent induction of additional troops, UNAMSIL has consolidated its presence in the south and west of the country with positions at Lungi, Port Loko, Rogberi Junction, Freetown, Hastings, Masiaka, Bo, Moyamba, Mile 91, Kenema, Joru and Daru (see map). UNAMSIL has also begun robust patrolling into RUF-controlled areas, as well as preparations for further forward deployment. At the same time, UNAMSIL has continued to strengthen its internal cohesion and command structure.

37. During the reporting period, teams of military observers conducted regular meetings with RUF, in particular teams at Port Loko, Moyamba, Mile 91, Kenema and Daru. Those meetings were held under the protection of United Nations troops. Most of the teams were also active in promoting the disarmament and demobilization process. There are currently 244 military observers in UNAMSIL, but the planned resumption of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities will require that this number is restored to its authorized level of 260 personnel.

Civilian police

38. The activities of the UNAMSIL civilian police component continued to focus on providing advice to the Sierra Leone police force, assisting in the selection of new recruits, training, and providing technical advice in the restructuring of the police force. With the assistance of UNAMSIL police advisers and the Commonwealth team, a new regional police training school was opened at Kenema in the Eastern Province. The opening of another regional school at Bo is being explored. United Nations civilian police advisers have also proposed projects intended to improve the conditions of service of the local police to be financed from the United Nations Trust Fund for Sierra Leone. These include a police post near Kissy in the western area of Freetown, refurbishment of a police station at Daru, rebuilding of a police post at Rogberi Junction and the repair of the Central Police Station facilities in Freetown.

39. United Nations police advisers in the Freetown area are engaged in a broad range of activities, including monitoring prisons, liaison with Sierra Leone police headquarters, training of personnel on security matters during the elections and the attachment of advisers to police divisions in the Freetown area. It would be my intention to bring the number of United Nations civilian police advisers to its authorized strength of 60 civilian police advisers in order to address the need to deploy civilian United Nations police officers to additional areas throughout Sierra Leone as security conditions improve. The current strength of the civilian police component is 33 civilian personnel.

Civil affairs

40. UNAMSIL has continued to work with the authorities in the efforts to extend civil authority to all areas under the Government's control. It is important to note that, even where UNAMSIL is deployed, including the Western Area, the Southern Province, and parts of the Eastern and Northern Provinces, complete civil administration is still lacking. Besides security concerns, the Government continues to cite the lack of resources as the main factor preventing it from fully establishing civil administration in these areas.

41. As outlined above, the UNAMSIL deployment throughout the country is undertaken for the principal purpose of facilitating the return of normalcy and extension of the authority of the Government. A task force for the restoration of civil authority, under the chairmanship of Vice-President Albert Joe Demby, met for the first time this year on 22 February to discuss preparations for deployment of government officials to new territories, once UNAMSIL deploys forward. It has since instituted weekly meetings, in which UNAMSIL participates. I would like to encourage the Government to develop and implement, with the assistance of the international community, a comprehensive plan for the extension of its institutions throughout Sierra Leone immediately in the wake of UNAMSIL deployment.

42. The election of Paramount Chiefs in the Southern Province districts of Bo, Pujehun, Moyamba and Bonthe is expected to take place between late March and mid-April 2001. The modalities of these elections have been worked out with the support of the United Kingdom Government. Elections are to be held in other chiefdoms, especially in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, once the security situation permits.

43. During the reporting period, UNAMSIL deployed its civil affairs officers to the Northern, Eastern and Southern Provinces and the Western Area. They have initiated contacts with existing local authorities, non-governmental organizations, donor agencies and other groups on the ground. The provision of resources for the functioning of local and traditional authority structures would greatly facilitate efforts to assist the Government in the extension of its authority throughout the country. Civil affairs officers would also be prepared to provide assistance to the Government in the implementation of reintegration projects for ex-combatants.

Human rights concerns

44. The already fragile human rights situation in Sierra Leone has been exacerbated by cross-border rebel attacks into Guinea and, in turn, by retaliatory shelling and cross-border attacks by the Guinean army. The internally displaced people who fled the attacks reported human rights violations committed by RUF as well as by Guinean military personnel, who allegedly looted and burnt villages, and abducted men they considered to be RUF members or sympathizers.

45. Reports continue to be received about RUF allegedly harassing civilians and forcibly recruiting both adults and children for fighting and forced labour. UNAMSIL also continues to investigate any allegations of human rights abuses committed by other military groups, including the Sierra Leone Army and the Civil Defence Force.

46. Approximately 280 persons, mostly RUF and members of other armed groups, remain detained in "safe custody" without charge under emergency powers declared by the Government. The conditions of detention are monitored by UNAMSIL and, since January 2001, by the International Committee of the Red Cross. Conditions in Freetown Central Prison at Pademba Road have been assessed by UNAMSIL as not fully satisfactory but there has been no evidence of physical mistreatment of the detainees. However, the detainees have not been informed of their legal status, nor have they had access to legal advice.

47. During December, UNAMSIL and its national non-governmental organization partners conducted pilot human rights training with the newly trained

Sierra Leone Army. Regular induction training on human rights for United Nations peacekeepers and military observers also continues. The Mission is currently making an assessment of ways to extend training to prison officials.

Protection of women and children

48. The fieldwork phase of a data-gathering project on the incidence and effects of war-related sexual violence against women and girls in Sierra Leone commenced in January 2001. UNAMSIL, working with a team from the non-governmental organization Physicians for Human Rights and local researchers, will be gathering information from women and girls in camps of internally displaced persons across the country to determine the scope of sexual violence against women and girls. The data will be used to advocate for better protection and programming on the ground. Where appropriate, the information may also be shared with the Truth and Reconciliation Committee and the proposed Special Court.

49. Dependants of ex-combatants remain a vulnerable group requiring enhanced protection and support through the reintegration process. This matter was raised in the World Bank's review of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. UNAMSIL is discussing with the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction and potential implementing agencies how the immediate and longer-term protection and assistance needs of this vulnerable group can be met.

50. UNHCR, working closely with the child protection agencies, has stationed personnel at Lungi, camps of internally displaced persons, and in some border towns to undertake registration of children and process requests from families to trace lost children. Potential child protection issues, including unaccompanied children, young people who are heads of families, child ex-combatants, and single parent families are being addressed in this process.

51. Following some allegations of abuse of women and minors involving United Nations personnel, UNAMSIL has initiated thorough investigations in all areas where peacekeepers are currently deployed. The investigations are carried out in collaboration with child protection personnel. So far, no allegations of abuse have been proved. However, the investigations will be pursued vigorously and any substantiated case will involve immediate disciplinary action. Meanwhile, UNAMSIL continues to sensitize all of its personnel to the special protection needs of women and children, as well as to the need to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission and Human Rights Commission

52. A number of initiatives to prepare for the early establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are currently under way. My Special Representative has invited applications for the four national members of the Commission and will forward his recommendations to the President of Sierra Leone, as envisaged in the statute of the Commission. Simultaneously, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has begun the search for the three international Commissioners, and has stepped up its support to the Commission to take into account the process leading to the establishment of the Special Court. Together with UNICEF, UNAMSIL is studying appropriate methods by which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission can ensure the appropriate protection of children as victims, witnesses and perpetrators. The relationship between the Commission and the Special Court, including matters such as the collection and use of evidence, witness protection and public awareness campaigns, will be discussed at a round-table meeting involving UNAMSIL, the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Government of Sierra Leone, international experts and civil society, to be convened in the near future. A research project on traditional forms of conflict resolution and reconciliation in Sierra Leone has also begun. In conjunction with Sierra Leonean civil society, a public awareness programme has commenced, utilizing, among other things, Radio UNAMSIL.

53. On 16 and 17 December 2000, UNAMSIL organized a consultative workshop on the proposed national Human Rights Commission, at which the Attorney-General introduced a draft of the required legislation, which was discussed at length by 40 invited participants representing the Government, civil society, the judiciary, the legal profession, the media and the different regions of the country. At the conclusion of the workshop, a consultative group was formed to

complete a commentary for the Government on the draft founding statute. The group, which includes UNAMSIL, has met twice and will make a report shortly to the Attorney-General, following consultations with the Special Adviser to the High Commissioner for Human Rights on national institutions.

54. Following the submission of the report by the Secretary-General on the establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone (S/2000/915), letters were exchanged between the Security Council and the Secretary-General which led to modifications in the texts of both the draft Agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone and the draft statute of the Court (S/2000/1234, S/2001/40 and S/2001/95). The Government of Sierra Leone has been consulted on these changes and, by a letter dated 9 February 2001, has conveyed to the Legal Counsel of the United Nations its willingness to accept these texts. Since its establishment and operations would depend on the availability of significant financial resources, I will shortly issue an appeal to all States to contribute to the funding of the operation of the Special Court.

Public information

55. Since my last report, UNAMSIL has strengthened its capacity to disseminate information designed to enhance the peace process. The Mission is implementing an information strategy to increase public understanding of its mandate, as well as activities under the revised concept of operations, which is described in section VI below. The central theme of the strategy is to project the efforts of the Mission's civilian and military components in facilitating the peace process in Sierra Leone, spotlighting ongoing operations as well as achievements of the Mission, to help mould public support for UNAMSIL and the peace process. UNAMSIL will also closely liaise with the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and make its outlets available for information and sensitization efforts to promote the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, particularly bearing in mind the high degree of illiteracy in the country.

56. In addition to regular outreach to the population, UNAMSIL intends to initiate closer interactions with teachers, young people, lawyers, labour unions, traders, and other local groups. UNAMSIL is also improving its interactions with the local and international media by providing regular briefings, as well as visits to areas where peacekeepers are deployed outside Freetown.

VI. Concept of operations

57. UNAMSIL has revised its concept of operations, as presented in my sixth report (S/2000/832 of 24 August 2000), to take into account the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement, the changes in the Mission's military structure and the circumstances on the ground. Troop contributors have been consulted on this revised concept during several meetings with the Secretariat.

58. The main objectives of UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone remain to assist the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to extend its authority, restore law and order and stabilize the situation progressively throughout the entire country, and to assist in the promotion of a political process which should lead to a renewed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and the holding, in due course, of free and fair elections.

59. The Mission's updated concept of operations integrates military and civilian aspects and envisages the deployment, in successive phases, into RUF-controlled areas of UNAMSIL troops, United Nations civil affairs, civilian police and human rights personnel, representatives of humanitarian agencies, and government personnel and assets to establish and consolidate State authority and basic services in these areas. It is clear that the success of this concept will very much depend on the availability of United Nations military resources and, in equal measure, on the extent to which these mutually reinforcing efforts are coordinated between the actors involved.

60. In its movement and deployment forward, UNAMSIL will continue to project the necessary military strength and determination to deter any attempt to use force against the United Nations and its mandate in Sierra Leone. The Mission's rules of engagement allow it to respond robustly to any attack or threat of attack, including, if necessary, in a pre-emptive manner. UNAMSIL military contingents continue to receive training in the application of these rules in order to ensure their uniform application.

61. The forward deployment of UNAMSIL would be carried out in stages, which are closely linked to the arrival and deployment of additional troops. In the first

stage, which is currently under way, UNAMSIL is expanding its area of operations by conducting long-range robust patrols into RUF-controlled areas. Such patrols have reached Makeni in the north and Bendu Junction in the east, and have also included overnight stays by United Nations troops in the Makeni area. In addition to routine patrols, UNAMSIL is aiming to carry out two company-sized patrols per battalion per week. The robust patrols will remain an essential element of the concept of operations and will gradually be expanded to cover the entire country. In addition to increased patrolling, UNAMSIL will continue to maintain liaison and contact with RUF at appropriate levels across all sectors. The Mission will also continue to conduct community projects, including small engineering tasks to be carried out in conjunction with extended patrols.

62. Upon the arrival of significant reinforcements provided by the third battalion and support units from Bangladesh, it is expected that UNAMSIL will possess the military capacity to enter the second stage of forward deployment by expanding its permanent presence to Lunsar, Magburaka, Makeni, Yele and Mano Junction. This deployment, which is expected to commence in mid-March, would ensure freedom of movement along the East/West supply routes and would also create the necessary conditions for the resumption of organized disarmament and demobilization by ex-combatants. At the same time, patrolling will continue towards and into Bumbuna, Kabala and Kambia districts and Kailahun. UNAMSIL has made clear that it expects RUF to dismantle its checkpoints and prepare for disarmament, since the Mission and, subsequently, the Government would assume responsibility for security in these areas.

63. In the third stage, subject to the availability of troops and further consultations with troop-contributing countries, UNAMSIL would deploy further forward to the diamond producing regions and to some border areas. It is expected that this deployment could provide the necessary security for the orderly conduct of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in those locations, the extension of government authority and basic services, and serve as an additional incentive for the return of refugees to Sierra Leone.

64. At the next stage, UNAMSIL may need to establish a presence at all key towns and areas across the territory of Sierra Leone to create the necessary conditions for the holding of elections. However, it would be too early to determine whether such an expansion of the UNAMSIL area of deployment would require additional troops. I intend to keep the security, political and humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone and in the subregion under close review and to revert to the Security Council with recommendations regarding the appropriate strength of UNAMSIL. I also intend to closely consult troop contributors at all stages of this process.

65. Since my previous report, I have continued efforts to seek the urgently needed contribution to UNAMSIL of additional well-trained and well-equipped troops. Several potential troop contributors have expressed their strong interest in participating in providing troops and other military resources for service with UNAMSIL and several of them have dispatched reconnaissance teams to the Mission. The Secretariat is in discussion with these and other Member States with regard to the modalities of their participation, and I hope that these discussions can be concluded very soon. When such new contingents have deployed to Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL's total military strength would reach a level of approximately 17,500 troops.

66. The military capacity corresponding to this level would enable UNAMSIL to make significant progress in its forward deployment, in particular to the diamond producing areas. As I indicated in my previous reports, to adequately discharge the tasks as identified by the Security Council in its resolution 1313 (2000) and assist the Government in regaining control of Sierra Leone's natural resources and key border areas, UNAMSIL would require up to 20,500 military personnel.

67. In this regard, I should also like to underline the particular responsibility of the Government to deploy its administration and to rebuild its institutions in the wake of the Mission's forward deployment. In my view, the forward deployment of UNAMSIL troops would serve little purpose if it is not followed up by the well-planned and well-executed extension of State authority and the gradual hand-over of security responsibilities to the country's armed forces and law enforcement agencies. These activities, which should start as early as possible and be pursued actively, would also enable the international community to consider adjusting its peacekeeping presence and to concentrate valuable resources on development,

humanitarian assistance and other vital activities. The establishment of security, the return of government officials, and the resumption of normal economic and social activities in the areas now controlled by RUF would also facilitate the return of Sierra Leonean refugees and internally displaced persons to their villages and towns of origin.

68. In this connection, I have decided to appoint Alan Doss as Deputy Special Representative in Sierra Leone, who would assume particular responsibilities for the coordination of the efforts of the international community to support and encourage the Government's efforts to extend and stabilize its authority throughout the country, including the preparation and conduct of elections in due course. Mr. Doss would also ensure a coherent approach by the United Nations in support of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. The new Deputy Special Representative, who had a distinguished career with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), will discharge those responsibilities concurrently with the functions of United Nations Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative and Humanitarian Coordinator.

VII. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

Status of the programme

69. Since the events in May 2000, a number of ex-combatants have continued to come forward for disarmament on an individual basis. Some 1,800 ex-combatants from the various factions, including about 600 of RUF, have thus been demobilized and entered into reintegration programmes. To date, a total of approximately 20,000 ex-combatants have been disarmed and demobilized, while about 7,500 have been disarmed but not demobilized. The latter category includes 6,900 ex-combatants who wished to re-enlist in the army and 600 child ex-combatants. Owing to the outbreak of hostilities in May 2000, about 3,500 ex-combatants of the 20,000 demobilized ex-combatants could not be properly discharged from the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. According to the Government, some 28,000 ex-combatants, including those who were re-armed during the May 2000 crisis, mainly RUF and Civil Defence Force, remain to be disarmed.

70. Late in February, a team comprising representatives of the World Bank, the United Nations and major donors held a series of discussions with government officials, United Nations agencies, and other stakeholders. The purpose of the discussions was to take stock of the progress made in implementing key recommendations of an independent review mission of September-October 2000. The findings of the team were generally positive. The Executive Secretariat of the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, in cooperation with UNAMSIL and other international partners, has since made major progress in streamlining and accelerating the management and operations of the programme.

71. In particular, the Government has processed and discharged about 1,600 ex-combatants who had remained in the demobilization centres, which has left those centres almost empty. As a result, the camp at Lungi was closed. The Executive Secretariat of the National Commission has also established a joint operations centre with UNAMSIL and has made several improvements to the processing of ex-combatants in the disarmament and demobilization stages of the programme. Operational plans for the resumption of the programme, as envisaged in the Abuja Agreement, have been put in place, including plans for the refurbishment of existing camps and the preparation of new demobilization centres. It is the Government's intention to keep the time spent by the ex-combatants at the demobilization centres as short as possible, with a maximum stay of up to two weeks.

72. A large quantity of the supplies needed for a fully-fledged resumption of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme have been procured. In addition, the World Food Programme (WFP) has committed a substantial amount of food to support the ongoing programme and has pre-positioned within the subregion a sufficient quantity of rice.

Reintegration

73. With regard to the crucial aspect of the reintegration of ex-combatants into Sierra Leonean society, the Government has made some progress, with the assistance of its international partners, in expanding the scope of existing reintegration programmes and in preparing reintegration opportunities for ex-combatants arriving in the communities. As a result, 6,853 ex-combatants have been involved in current reintegration projects and a capacity exists to enrol an additional

4,300 ex-combatants into reintegration projects that can soon be activated. There are however thousands of ex-combatants who have not reported to regional reintegration offices and whose whereabouts and activities are unknown. There exists a need, therefore, for an improved mechanism to track the movements of ex-combatants and to ensure that they make full use of the reintegration opportunities that exist for them.

74. Opportunities have also been created for the dependants of ex-combatants in the form of microcredits, of which 2,100 are in effect and 500 are awaiting implementation. Discussions are also under way with several international partners for the creation of 1,400 additional places for ex-combatants in the areas of agriculture, vocational training and small enterprise development, formal education and public works.

75. The current reintegration activities have been decentralized to better-staffed regional offices and, as much as possible, have been integrated with programmes designed to support internally displaced persons and other vulnerable groups. The Government has also designed a dedicated programme of assistance for mid-level field commanders of the various armed groups, which should provide an incentive for them to disarm. UNICEF continues to play a leading role in the reintegration of child ex-combatants. There may be a need on the part of the Government to take additional measures to address the needs of ex-combatants' dependants and ensure a proper linkage between the activities of the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration and the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction.

76. Following further discussions between UNAMSIL and the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, major donors and the World Bank, a consensus emerged with regard to the contribution of UNAMSIL to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. As was indicated in my previous report, UNAMSIL is expected to assume a broader responsibility. This will be reflected in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in a finalized joint operational plan, which should also describe clearly the roles to be played by other entities, including bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations.

77. According to this plan, UNAMSIL will continue to provide security at disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites; receive, screen and process ex-combatants; collect and disable weapons and ammunition, including through mobile destruction facilities; transport ex-combatants from the reception centres to the demobilization centres; and transport, store and destroy the collected weapons.

78. UNAMSIL is taking measures to improve its training for military observers and other personnel engaged in the programme to increase its overall involvement and assistance in the management of the programme. In particular, the Mission's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration cell will be strengthened to ensure that all military and civilian aspects of the programme are fully integrated.

79. The main area of increased involvement by UNAMSIL would be the provision of enhanced managerial and coordination support at the demobilization sites. UNAMSIL military observers have assumed this responsibility de facto since the withdrawal in May 2000 of personnel contracted by the United Kingdom Department for International Development. I intend to strengthen this important function by adding to the camp management teams United Nations Volunteers, who would work in tandem with military observers to ensure the welfare of ex-combatants and coordinate other activities at the demobilization centres. In addition, the civil affairs component of UNAMSIL would be closely involved in the implementation of the reintegration aspects of the programme.

Outstanding issues

80. The improvements in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme brought about by the Government of Sierra Leone are considerable. However, several areas require additional attention. In particular, it would be important for the Government to determine the nature and modalities of the initial reintegration benefits for ex-combatants. While these benefits are likely to include a cash payment to allow ex-combatants to meet some of their immediate needs as they enter civilian life, it would be important to avoid the impression that the participation of ex-combatants in the programme is on the basis of "cash for weapons". Once a decision on reintegration benefits is taken, it should be widely disseminated through an effective and consistent information and

sensitization campaign. It is obvious that a clear and consistent message regarding reintegration benefits for ex-combatants and their families, which should also consistently be delivered in practice, could provide a strong incentive for disarmament. Similarly, the Government should indicate clearly what avenues are open to ex-combatants who wish to join the armed forces.

81. It would also be important for the Government to clarify the status of the Civil Defence Force. According to the Government's declared position, the Civil Defence Force may in due course be transformed into a volunteer territorial defence force. It should however be recalled that, in accordance with the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement, the Civil Defence Force should be disarmed and demobilized, both as a confidence-building measure and to help create the proper conditions for free and fair elections in the future. The creation of a volunteer territorial defence force should, in principle, take place in tandem with the military restructuring plan, according to which eligible civilians and demobilized members of the various armed groups would be able to join the national army.

82. In the meantime, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme has remained open to ex-combatants who wished to join on an individual basis, but many of them were unable to produce a weapon. Reportedly, many RUF weapons are centrally stored and their distribution is firmly controlled by field commanders. During the screening process, UNAMSIL requires therefore that ex-combatants provide credible support for their claim that they were combatants if they are unable to hand over a weapon. This flexibility will continue to apply on an exceptional basis. However, once UNAMSIL has deployed forward and the requisite disarmament, demobilization and reintegration facilities have been put in place in areas currently controlled by RUF, the programme should resume in an organized manner, with full cooperation by RUF, and with each ex-combatant handing over a weapon or entering the programme with several other ex-combatants with a crew-served weapon. This principle should also apply to the Civil Defence Force.

83. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme is funded through the Government's budget, a World Bank loan, voluntary contributions to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund which is managed by the World Bank, and parallel funding from other international partners, in particular the United Kingdom Department for International Development, UNICEF and WFP. According to a World Bank estimate, sufficient funding would be available to cover disarmament, demobilization and reintegration operations for an additional six months. The Government is in the process of revising its estimates for the overall costs of the programme, however, and it is highly likely that significant additional resources may be required, especially for the reintegration of ex-combatants. A donors' conference, to be organized by the Government and the World Bank, would therefore need to be convened in the short term.

VIII. Humanitarian aspects

84. Access to the areas under RUF control remained restricted except for a programme of immunization which was held over a four-day period in February and which reached children in all parts of the country. A second round of immunizations is planned for 16 and 17 March in RUF-controlled areas.

85. Talks have begun with RUF through various contact groups, including UNAMSIL and United Nations agency staff to seek access to RUF-controlled areas. Several international non-governmental organizations which are interested in expanding their programmes have also been in touch with RUF.

86. Thousands of Sierra Leoneans living in border areas close to the fighting in the Kambia district have fled to safer areas, mainly on the Lungi peninsula. There was a new influx of such displaced people following helicopter gunship attacks on villages at Yelibuya Island on 20 January 2001, when reportedly many houses were destroyed and at least 20 persons were killed or wounded.

87. The large numbers of displaced persons place an added burden on United Nations agencies and humanitarian non-governmental organizations. While many displaced people have been accommodated in host communities in the Lungi peninsula, others receive little if any assistance and some are living in unacceptable conditions. The influx of returnees, internally displaced persons and discharged ex-combatants to already crowded areas in Freetown and Kenema has also led to an increase in criminal activities.

88. The situation in Guinea has caused the movement of refugees and thousands of internally displaced persons both in Sierra Leone and in Guinea. UNHCR, together with the International Organization for Migration, has begun a programme of transporting many of the returnees by providing boats from Conakry to Freetown for up to 2,500 people a week to help avoid the danger of crossing borders controlled by rebel forces. Taking into account those refugees repatriated with the assistance of the Government of Sierra Leone since September 2000, the total number of refugees returned by boat to Freetown now stands at 40,000. UNCHR and its implementing partners have opened several new transit centres to screen and process returning refugees before they are sent to more permanent shelter in secure areas of the country.

89. The Government's resettlement programme is scheduled to begin by the end of March, at which time internally displaced persons currently living in camps will be moved to safe areas where they have chosen to be resettled with the assistance of a wide variety of humanitarian partners.

90. Staff of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are working with United Nations agency representatives to prepare a regional consolidated appeal document to be presented to donors in March.

IX. Financial aspects

91. As indicated in my eighth report to the Security Council on UNAMSIL, the General Assembly, by its resolution 54/241 B of 15 June 2000, appropriated $476.7 million for the maintenance of UNAMSIL for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001. That appropriation was based on a strength of 11,100 military personnel authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 1289 (2000). My revised budget for the maintenance of UNAMSIL for the period from 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001, incorporating its resource requirements for the same period already appropriated by the General Assembly, amounts to $562 million and reflects the Mission's increased strength of 13,000 military personnel authorized by the Council in its resolution 1299 (2000). Review of the revised budget has already been completed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and I expect the General Assembly to take action on it in March 2001 during the first part of its resumed fifty-fifth session.

92. Should the Security Council approve my recommendations set out below as to the further expansion of the Mission's military force and extension of the UNAMSIL mandate, respectively, I shall revert to the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly as appropriate with a request for additional resources to support deployment of additional contingents and their equipment. The financial implications of the expansion of UNAMSIL to a level of 17,500 military personnel will be issued shortly in an addendum to the present report.

93. As at 31 January 2001, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNAMSIL amounted to $259.1 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations as at the same date was $2,651.6 million. Contributions to the Trust Fund to support United Nations Peacekeeping-related efforts in Sierra Leone amounted to $2.3 million, with expenditure authorized in the amount of $1.4 million.

X. Observations and recommendations

94. While the situation in Sierra Leone has remained relatively stable since the signing of the Abuja Agreement, deep concerns remain about the continuing incursions and violence at the borders of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. I call upon the Governments of these countries to work closely with ECOWAS and the United Nations to bring an urgent end to the current crisis and create conditions for peace and human development in the subregion. In this connection, the ongoing efforts by regional leaders to facilitate a meeting of the Heads of State of the Mano River Union countries deserve the full support and encouragement of the international community.

95. It is imperative that the leaders of RUF and their principal backers stop any further incursions by RUF fighters and other armed elements across the borders of the subregion. This would bring much-needed stability to the volatile borders and facilitate efforts to assist and, where possible, repatriate the many refugees stranded there. UNAMSIL, within its mandate and available resources, would stand ready to provide the necessary assistance in this regard.

96. At the same time, the relative stability in Sierra Leone and direct contacts with RUF have enabled UNAMSIL to conduct the relief-in-place of the two large contingents and the rotation of other units, without abandoning any location where the Force had been deployed. Moreover, the Mission's contingents have managed to consolidate their positions in their areas of responsibility, thus setting the stage for the forward deployment of UNAMSIL.

97. The continuing reluctance of RUF to disarm and to allow the Government to extend its authority to areas held by the rebels remains a cause for deep concern and leaves serious doubts about their intentions. In particular, it would appear that so far RUF is ready to implement only those aspects of the Abuja Agreement that pose no threat to its military strength and to its exploitation of the natural resources of the country. Obviously, this position deepens considerably the reluctance on the part of the Government to engage RUF in a political dialogue and to create the confidence that is necessary for such a dialogue to bear fruit.

98. A key objective of the peace process in Sierra Leone remains to end, as soon as possible, the RUF rebellion, to extend the legitimate authority throughout the country, to disarm and demobilize combatants and also to allow the rebels to pursue political objectives in a democratic process. The two-track approach, which had been endorsed by the Security Council, continues to offer the best chances of achieving a durable peace through a combination of a strong military deterrent and a political dialogue between the parties to the Abuja Agreement.

99. The forward deployment of UNAMSIL in sufficient strength is an indispensable element in that approach and I recommend that the authorized strength of the Mission be increased to enable it to begin to discharge some of the tasks identified in Security Council resolution 1313 (2000). I also recommend that the current mandate of the Mission be extended for another six months, until 30 September 2001.

100. I am pleased to report to the Council that several Member States are giving serious consideration to providing additional troops and equipment to UNAMSIL, and I am hopeful that a significant number of military personnel can be deployed within the next six months. Such a deployment would bring the strength of UNAMSIL to a level of 17,500 troops. I intend to continue to seek further commitments from potential troop contributors and will keep the Security Council informed.

101. I should, however, emphasize that durable peace and stability in Sierra Leone cannot be achieved solely through the presence of a peacekeeping force. The Government of Sierra Leone has particular responsibility to pursue complementary efforts by restoring its authority and basic services throughout the country; rebuilding the capacity to provide security by national means and designing, implementing an effective demobilization and reintegration programme and ultimately, promoting national reconciliation. I once again urge all concerned to make full use of the security and stability prevailing in the areas where UNAMSIL is already deployed and to fully restore State administration and public services in these areas and simultaneously to be prepared to extend Government authority to the locations where UNAMSIL is expected to deploy soon.

102. While important headway has been made in the management and operations of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, there is still room for improvement, in particular with regard to the implementation of reintegration programmes for ex-combatants. Another crucial area would be to ensure the adoption of consistent procedures, incentives and benefits related to that programme, which should be effectively communicated to ex-combatants and the population at large.

103. While important, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme cannot be separated from the larger political context and the two-track approach adopted by the international community. It would be important therefore for the Government of Sierra Leone and all other parties involved to formulate more clearly their approaches to the peace process, in close coordination with ECOWAS and the United Nations. This includes a clearer picture of the possible future status of members of armed groups, as well as the impact of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and of the planned Special Court. This additional clarity concerning long-term approaches to the peace process would also be helpful to donors as they consider making financial contributions to peace efforts in Sierra Leone.

104. The current cessation of hostilities provides a unique opportunity for all parties to pursue confidence-

building measures and restore dialogue. In this regard, the decision by RUF to establish a political body in Freetown is a step in the right direction. I highly commend the Government of Sierra Leone for consenting to this — it is to be hoped — constructive RUF presence in the capital, which should facilitate the opening of a meaningful political dialogue.

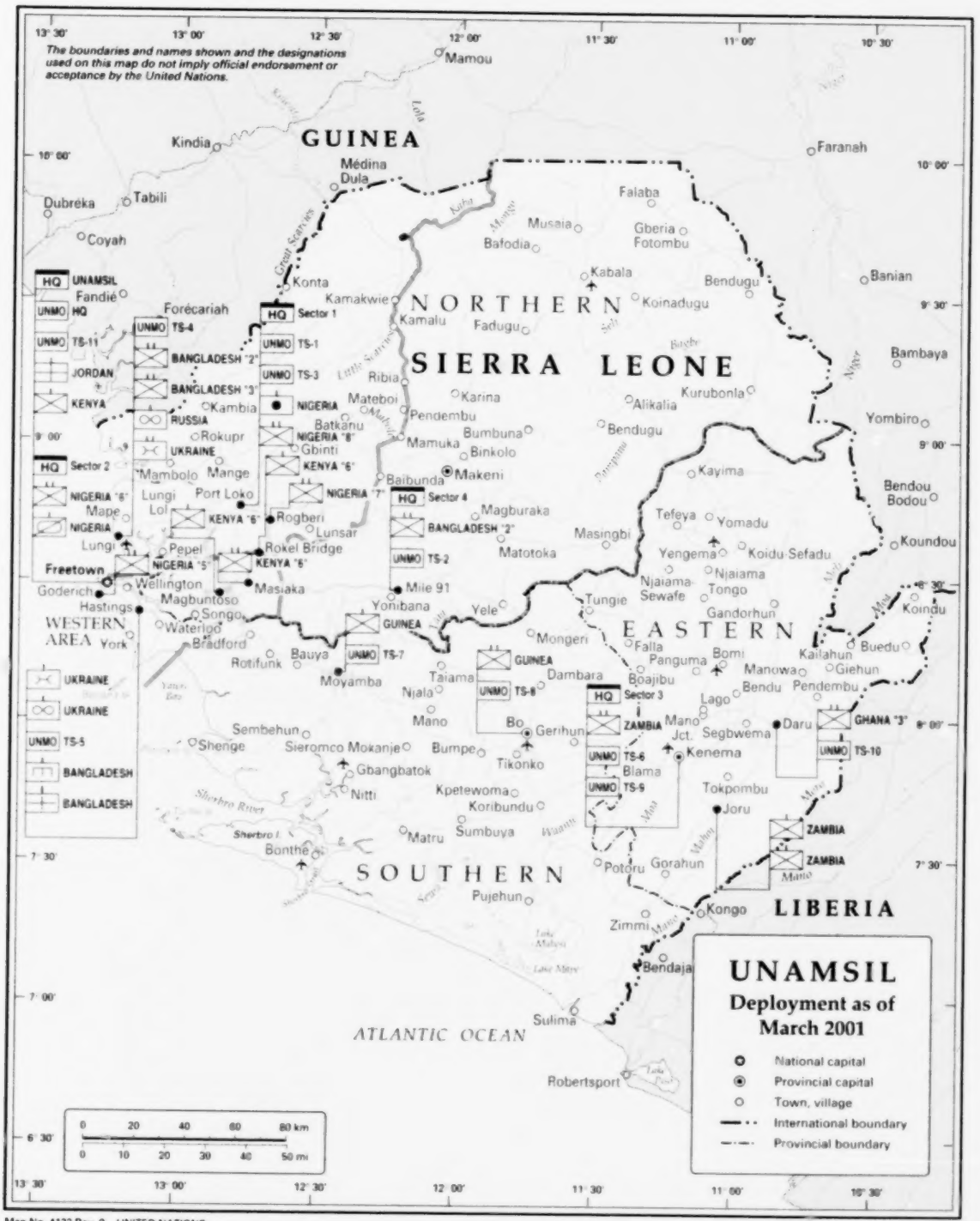
105. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to all Member States that have contributed troops and police personnel to UNAMSIL, or have provided support in any other way, for their continuing commitment to the restoration of peace in Sierra Leone. In addition, I should like to pay tribute to my Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, to all the men and women serving with UNAMSIL, as well as to the United Nations agencies in Sierra Leone for carrying out their task in very difficult and hazardous conditions.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 14 March 2001

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Sector headquarters staff*	*Total*
Bangladesh	12	18	2 447	65	2 542
Bolivia	4				4
Canada	5				5
China	6				6
Croatia	10				10
Czech Republic	5				5
Denmark	2				2
Egypt	10				10
France	1				1
Gambia	26				26
Ghana	4	12	776	58	850
Guinea	12	3	773		788
Indonesia	10				10
Jordan	10	3	117		130
Kenya	11	19	995	65	1 090
Kyrgyzstan	2				2
Malaysia	10				10
Mali	8				8
Nepal	6				6
New Zealand	2				2
Nigeria	4	23	3 223	61	3 311
Pakistan	10				10
Russian Federation	15	4	106		125
Slovakia	2				2
Sweden	3				3
Thailand	5				5
Ukraine		5	546		551
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	20	8			28
United Republic of Tanzania	12				12
Uruguay	11				11
Zambia	11	3	773	4	791
Total	**249**	**98**	**9 756**	**253**	**10 356**

Civilian police: Bangladesh: 4; Gambia: 2; Ghana: 3; India: 1; Jordan: 3; Kenya: 3; Malaysia: 3; Nepal: 5; Norway: 2; Senegal: 5; Zimbabwe: 2. Total: 33.


The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
GUINEA
SIERRA LEONE
LIBERIA
NORTHERN
SOUTHERN
EASTERN
WESTERN AREA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
Mamou
Kindia
Médina Dula
Faranah
Dubréka
Tabili
Coyah
Falaba
Musaia
Gberia Fotombu
Bafodia
Konta
Kamakwie
Kamalu
Fadugu
Kabala
Bendugu
Banian
Koinadugu
Bambaya
Fandié
Forécariah
Ribia
Karina
Alikalia
Kurubonla
Yombiro
Mateboi
Pendembu
Bumbuna
Binkolo
Mamuka
Batkanu
Gbinti
Kambia
Rokupr
Mambolo
Mange
Lungi
Port Loko
Lol
Rogberi
Lunsar
Rokel Bridge
Pepel
Mape
Freetown
Goderich
Hastings
Wellington
Magbuntoso
Songo
Waterloo
Bradford
York
Rotifunk
Bauya
Moyamba
Masiaka
Baibunda
Makeni
Magburaka
Matotoka
Mile 91
Yonibana
Taiama
Njala
Mano
Bo
Gerihun
Sembehun
Shenge
Sieromco
Mokanje
Gbangbatok
Nitti
Bumpe
Tikonko
Kpetewoma
Koribundu
Sumbuya
Matru
Bonthe
Pujehun
Potoru
Gorahun
Zimmi
Sulima
Robertsport
Kayima
Tefeya
Yomadu
Masingbi
Yengema
Koidu Sefadu
Njaiama Sewafe
Njaiama Tongo
Gandorhun
Koundou
Bendou Bodou
Koindu
Tungie
Yele
Mongeri
Falla
Panguma
Bomi
Kailahun
Buedu
Giehun
Manowa
Pendembu
Bendu
Lago
Boajibu
Dambara
Segbwema
Kenema
Blama
Tokpombu
Joru
Daru
Kongo
Bendaja
Lake Piso
Lake Mahyé
Lake Mitty
Sherbro River
Sherbro I.
Waanje
Mano
Moa
Makona
Kolenten
Yaleni
Bafi
Pampana
Seli
Little Scarcies
Great Scarcies
Kolente
Kolenten
Mafindo
Mafanta
Mabole
Mabang
Mabay
Mabesi
Mabai
Mabai
Mabai